

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL (ESC) and ENERGY TRANSITION SUBCOMMITTEE (ETS)

Thursday, May 19, 2022, Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams, 7:30 – 9:30 p.m.

### DRAFT MINUTES

#### **1. Call to Order: 7:30 p.m.**

#### **2. Reading of Virtual Meeting Notice**

This meeting was held via electronic communications using 'Microsoft Teams.' This meeting was held pursuant to and in compliance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Section 2.2-3708.2 and state and local legislation adopted to allow for continued government operation during the COVID-19 declared emergency.

#### **3. Roll Call**

**Attendees: ESC Members:** Joseph Schiarizzi (Chair), Mike Trauberman, Jennifer Tabola, Jon Ward (ETS Chair), Andy Young, Jennifer Tabola; **Student Member:** n/a; **City Council Liaison:** n/a; **Planning Commission Liaison:** Cory Firestone Weiss; **City Staff:** Kate Walker, ESC Staff Liaison; **ESC ETS:** Stacy Noblet; **Urban Forestry Chair/HRTG:** Amy Crumpton; **Public:** David Bloomgarden, Chris Behr.

#### **4. Public Comments** None were received.

#### **5. NVTA FY2022-2027 Six Year Program**

Only one City project is under consideration this year, and Kate noted that public and individual comments weigh heavily with the NVTA board. Jon W. thought any ESC comment to NVTA should highlight that the congestion-reduction rating is low because this is a walk / bike project. Joseph S. said sidewalk portions are narrow and not ADA compliant (per Debbie Hiscott), so undergrounding utilities is part of being able to widen sidewalks.

**ACTION ITEM #1 (Joseph):** Write an ESC letter of support to NVTA emphasizing walkability and connectivity to Metro. Circulate to ESC for feedback by end-of-day May 20, since due date to NVTA is May 22.

#### **6. Subcommittee & Liaison reports: ETS (Jon); ETG (Sarah); HRTG (Stacey/Amy)**

**ETS:** Jon W. reported that LEAP (Local Energy Alliance Program) Solarize program for Northern Virginia is halfway through. Kate said both Solarize and the Arlington Solar Co-op were mentioned in the Focus newsletter, and the City website lists both (<https://www.fallschurchva.gov/533/Green-Power>) but for unknown reasons has highlighted Solarize more. She reported a company going door-to-door falsely claiming to be affiliated with the City's solar program. LEAP started their thermalizeVA.org pilot program to help homeowners improve efficiency and electrify space and water heating and cooking. Jon noted that Loudoun's Environmental Commission will present to Loudoun's supervisors a list of program and policy concepts on May 25 [Note: that presentation was later postponed to July

27]. It may inspire ideas that the City can adopt. Mike T. said developing a green building would receive more attention in the summer/fall.

ETG: Kate W. said that Operation Earth Watch (OEW) has been unsuccessful in recruiting new volunteers and is unlikely to continue next academic year. Parents seem to be over-committed elsewhere and the 28-year-old program may not have evolved with the times.

HRTG: Amy said the last Spring rip was held 5/14 at Cherry Hill park with about 19 volunteers, and the full-Spring total has been about 160 volunteers and about 285 volunteer-hours. HRTG is thinking of ways to support OEW, and restoring school landscape / gardens is both needed and makes it easier for teachers to get students involved right outside the door.

Amy said the arborist's office has been repositioned to Operations within the Dept. of Public Works pushing the arborist to spend more time as more of a "crew chief" in the field vice administrative and policy commitments. The Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) will be writing a letter to express concern about the effects of the arborist's role being understaffed and bypassed in administrative decisions. All ESC members said they would support a UFC letter on this issue. Mike T. recommended the periodic "Ask the Council" Wednesday morning sessions as a venue for communication to government. Next on calendar is June 22, 9 a.m.

ACTION ITEM #2 (Amy): Draft a letter for consideration by the ESC.

Planning Commission (PC): Cory said: (A) the East End plan would be referred to Boards and Commissions between July and September. Kate advised ESC to review the East End plans on the PC webpage. (B) The Planning Dept. plans a lot of public engagement on it. (C) The special exception site plan (SESP) review for the West End senior housing building is open for public comment but is not being sent to all Boards and Commissions. It will be back before the PC on June 1. Public comment on energy efficiency concerns would best be directed to City Council, which has a work session on that SESP on July 18, with final action on August 8.

## **7. Staff updates**

An MOU with MWCOC is to be signed soon, and the funding for consultant services for the Community Climate Mitigation and Energy Action Plan must be encumbered by June 17 and spent by June 30, 2023. Another task order for the "government and schools" energy action plan would then be signed and performed by June 30, 2023. The \$50k for the latter was recently approved in the FY23 budget.

City Council has had several work sessions on "transitional" zoning districts. The agenda has a linked document discussing City Council's schedule for reviewing the Planning Dept's recommended changes. Kate encouraged ESC members to review, monitor and comment on these changes. She said Paul Stoddard (Planning) or his designee would be the contact for presenting to ESC in July. Cory and Kate mentioned planned "public listening sessions" as possibility venue for early B&C involvement.

City management has not identified anyone to replace Kate as staff liaison to the ESC, which will limit the ability of ESC to receive communications.

## **8. Review & Approval of Appreciation Proclamation and the April ESC minutes**

Prior to the meeting, a proclamation of appreciation for Kate Walker's service as ESC liaison and Environmental Programs Coordinator had been reviewed and edited by current and past leadership of the ESC and its subcommittees. Jon W. read it and made a motion for it to be adopted into the record and delivered to City Council and City management. Seconded by Mike T., adopted unanimously.

Minutes of the April 21, 2022, meeting were approved unanimously.

#### **9. Next Meeting**

Planned for June 16, 2022, 7:30 p.m., virtual